

Draft Environmental Assessment

Securing Public Hunting Access in Perpetuity on the Buxbaum-Boulder Creek Ranch

December 2018



Photo courtesy of Five Valleys Land Trust



Region 2
3201 Spurgin Road, Missoula, MT 59804

Draft Environmental Assessment Checklist

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. Type of proposed state action

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) proposes to accept assignment (delegation) of the “right of public hunting access” component of a conservation easement (CE) to be held by Five Valleys Land Trust (FVLT) on the Buxbaum-Boulder Creek Ranch (hereafter, Buxbaum Ranch) in Granite County. The Buxbaum Ranch is located just northwest of Maxville (about halfway between Drummond and Philipsburg) and has diverse wildlife habitat including native grasslands, forested draws, pocket wetlands, and aspen stands. The CE on this property would protect important big game winter range and a variety of habitats for nongame wildlife species including Montana Species of Concern, as well as provide public hunting opportunities on 1,193 acres. FVLT is seeking to assign the management of the public hunting access portion of the CE to FWP. The Upper Clark Fork River Basin Remediation and Restoration Advisory Council voted to recommend partial funding from the Montana Department of Justice Natural Resource Damage Program (NRDP) to complete this proposed CE project. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service is providing additional funding to purchase this CE, through its Agricultural Conservation Easement Program. No FWP funds would be used to acquire the proposed CE; therefore, the proposed action is for FWP to accept the assignment of the right of public hunting access, in perpetuity, as set forth in the CE to be held by FVLT.

2. Agency authority for the proposed action

FWP has the authority under state law § 87-1-201, Montana Code Annotated (MCA) to protect, enhance, and regulate the use of Montana's fish and wildlife resources for public benefit now and in the future, and to acquire land for this purpose (§ 87-1-209, MCA).

3. Name, address and phone number of project sponsor, if other than the agency None

4. Anticipated Schedule

Public Comment Period: December 19, 2018—January 17, 2019

Public Hearing: In Drummond on January 8, 2019 (Tuesday) at 6:30 p.m. at the Drummond Community Center (54 East Broad Street)

Decision Notice Published: soon after January 17, 2019

Action/Approval: FWP Fish & Wildlife Commission, approval requested: February 13, 2019

5. Location affected by proposed action

The Buxbaum Ranch is located within FWP Administrative Region 2 in the foothills of the Flint Range south of Drummond in Granite County, Montana (Figures 1 and 2).

Project Location:

Buxbaum Ranch

The property is in Granite County approximately just northwest of Maxville (about halfway between Drummond and Philipsburg), Montana. Access to the property is via Interstate Highway 90 at the Drummond exit, then south via state Highway 1.

The property occurs in all or part of the following sections:

Township 8 North, Range 13 West; Sections 3, 4, and 9

Township 9 North, Range 13 West; Section 34

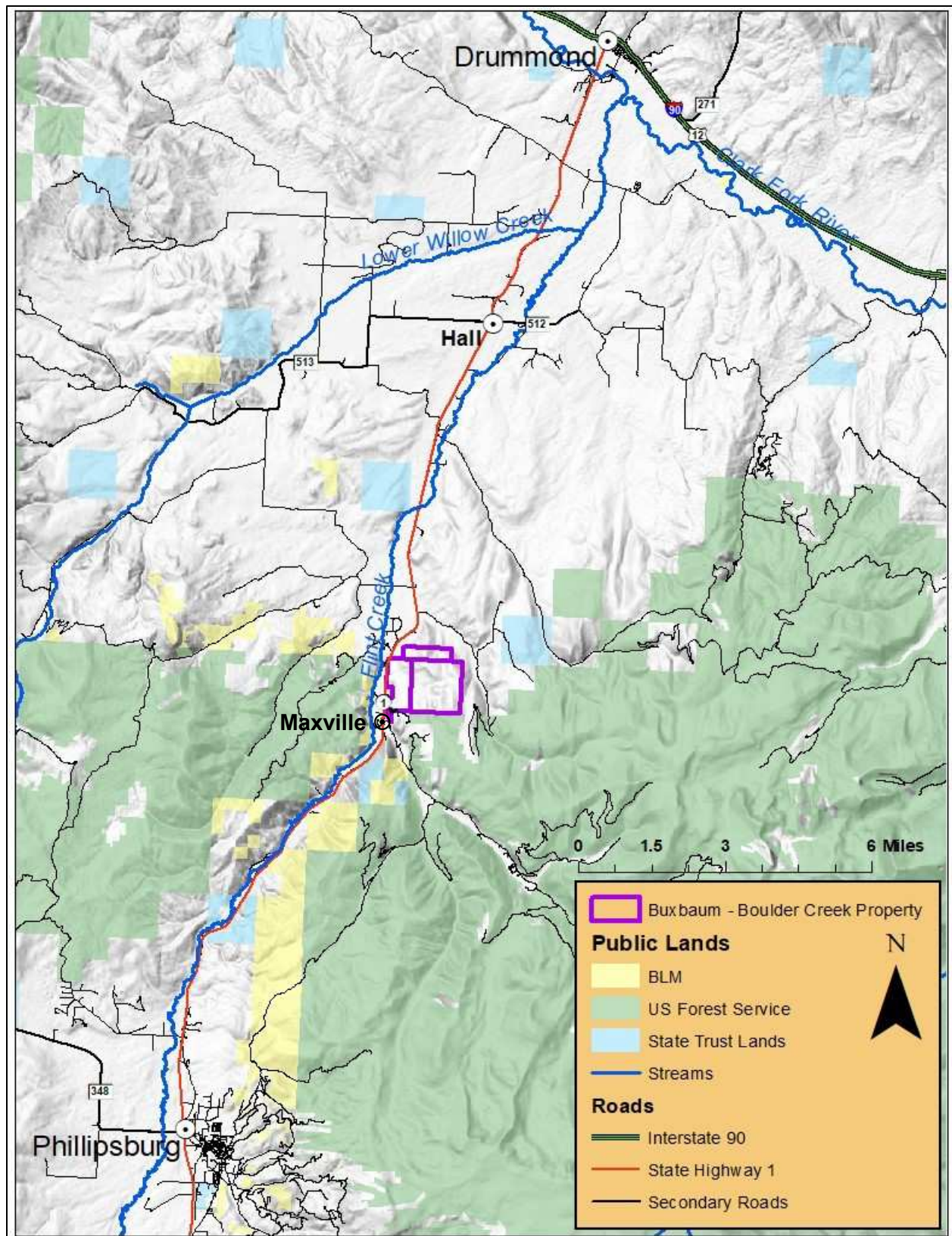


Figure 1. Location of the proposed Buxbaum Ranch conservation easement and public hunting access, at Maxville (between Drummond and Phillipsburg), showing overall landscape and nearby land ownership.

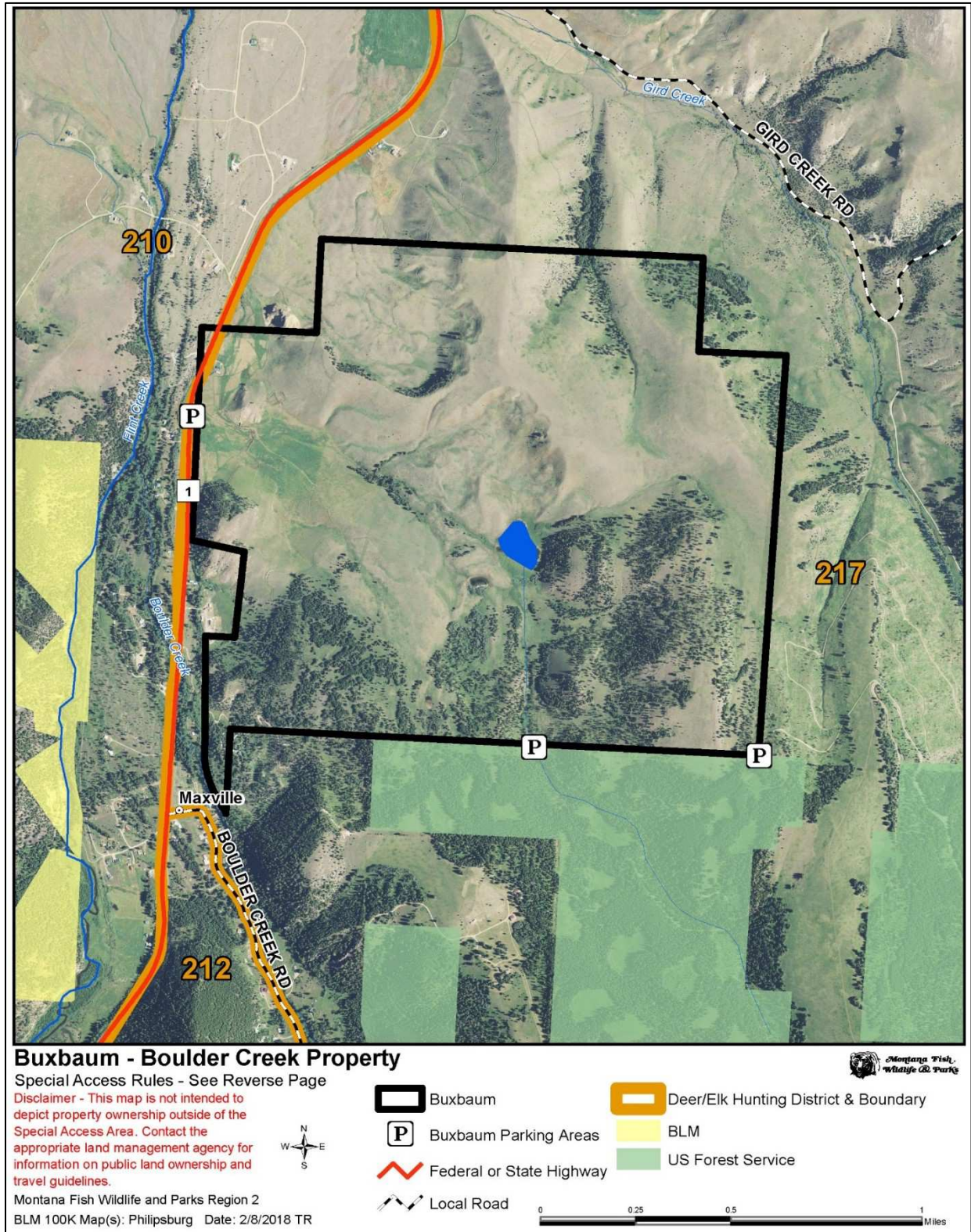


Figure 2. Draft map for proposed public hunting access on the proposed Buxbaum Ranch conservation easement. (All land not delineated as BLM or US Forest Service is private land.)

6. Estimated project size

	<u>Acres</u>		<u>Acres</u>
(a) Developed:		(d) Floodplain	<u>0</u>
Residential	<u>2</u>		
Industrial	<u>0</u>	(e) Productive:	
		Irrigated cropland	<u>103</u>
(b) Open Space/	<u>1,189</u>	Dry cropland	<u>0</u>
Woodlands/Recreation		Forestry	<u>327</u>
(c) Wetlands/ Riparian	<u>18</u>	Rangeland	<u>844</u>
Areas		Other	<u>0</u>

7. Permits, Funding and Overlapping Jurisdiction

(a) **Permits:** none required

(b) **Funding:**

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)	\$537,000.
Natural Resource Damage Program (NRDP)	<u>\$200,000. (approx.)</u>
Total	\$737,000. (approx.)

(c) **Other Overlapping Jurisdictional Responsibilities:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
Upper Clark Fork Basin Trustee Restoration Council	CE funding approval
FWP Fish & Wildlife Commission	Access Assignment approval

Note: No FWP funding is required for FWP to accept assignment of the public hunting access component of the CE.

8. Narrative summary of the proposed action

FWP proposes to secure public hunting access in perpetuity on 1,193 acres of grassland, forest, and wetland habitat near Maxville, Montana, which are owned by the Buxbaum family. The proposed grant of public hunting access would not require any purchasing costs from FWP. If selected and implemented, this proposed action would bind FWP to implement, review, and update a *Public Hunting Access Plan* (Appendix) for the subject properties annually, or up to every five years, in cooperation with the landowner. Following guidance in the conservation easement and the *Public Hunting Access Plan*, FWP would be responsible for verifying that the landowner offers the opportunity for at least 50 hunter days of fair and equitable, free public-hunting access each year into the future, excluding the landowner's family and employees. FWP would provide an enforcement presence consistent with its presence on other conservation easements, Block Management Areas, Fishing Access Sites and similar points of public access on or surrounded by private lands.

The Montana Department of Justice's Natural Resource Damage Program (NRDP) and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are working with FVLT to protect the above-referenced 1,193 acres by purchasing a perpetual conservation easement (CE, to be held by FVLT) on the Buxbaum property. As part of this process, NRDP and FVLT would work with FWP to secure a public hunting access provision as part of the FVLT conservation easement. FWP proposes to accept FVLT's assignment of the easement provision pertaining to public hunting access because FWP is the qualified organization best equipped to manage, monitor, and enforce the access terms in perpetuity, consistent with the overall intent of the FVLT conservation easement. FWP has extensive experience in acquiring and managing public access provisions in perpetual conservation easements that are held in the public trust by FWP. FVLT would retain sole and full responsibility as the Grantee for monitoring and enforcing compliance with all other terms of the conservation easement, beyond the public hunting access component.

The subject property is in the foothills of the Flint Range in the Clark Fork River Basin of western Montana. The Buxbaum Ranch contains native montane grasslands, a diversity of wetland and riparian habitats, and a mosaic of forested draws that are connected to larger reaches of wildlife habitat in the Flint Creek Range. The property enhances access to nearby Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest lands. The ranch has one existing homesite along Highway 1 and a small flood-irrigated pasture located east of Highway 1. Other than the single homesite, the property provides open space and diverse habitat for wildlife.

The Buxbaum-Boulder Creek conservation easement project is adjacent the NRDP Lower Flint Creek Priority Landscape Area identified in the *Upper Clark Fork River Basin (UCFRB) Aquatic & Terrestrial Resources Restoration Plan* (2012)¹. The Buxbaum Ranch is classified as Priority Three under the NRDP plan, recognizing the importance of “maintaining or improving wildlife species diversity, natural ecological functions, and habitat connectivity in grassland, forest, and riparian ecological systems.” The property is also located within the Upper Clark Fork-Garnets Tier II Terrestrial Focus Area for FWP’s *Montana’s State Wildlife Action Plan* (2015)².

The Buxbaum Ranch is comprised of montane grasslands that provide winter range to support mule deer and elk, as well as a variety of nongame bird and small mammal species. Wetlands on the ranch include three ponds that support amphibian and reptile species as well as a variety of songbirds and waterfowl. These small ponds are likely important stopover areas for migratory birds between the wetland complexes of the Blackfoot Valley and the upper Deer Lodge Valley. Aspen stands on the property support a high biodiversity of nongame species and further support big game species such as moose and white-tailed deer. Overall, the diversity of habitats on the property supports a variety of wildlife species and provides an assortment of hunting opportunities including big game and upland game birds.

NRDP and FVLT have worked jointly with FWP to secure and develop a public hunting access plan for public hunting access on the Buxbaum Ranch. The intent of the conservation easement is to protect this property’s wildlife habitat and public recreational values while keeping the property in private ownership and management. The private property would remain a working ranch and retain agricultural and cultural values in Granite County. Protecting this property with a conservation easement would conserve native grassland, forest, and wetland habitats and provide public hunting access to wildlife resources.

9. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives

Alternative A: No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, FWP would not accept assignment of the rights for public hunting access on the Buxbaum Ranch from FVLT’s conservation easement. This would be expected to result in a failed CE project (i.e., the CE would not be purchased and finalized, due to lack of a public hunting access component in the CE as desired by NRDP, an essential funding institution). In that event, the opportunity to secure perpetual public hunting access could be lost.

Alternative B: FWP acceptance of an assignment of public hunting access rights in perpetuity from FVLT on the Buxbaum Ranch

FWP would accept assignment of the rights of public hunting access on the Buxbaum Ranch from FVLT (under its conservation easement on the property). FWP would be obligated to implement, review, and update a *Public Hunting Access Plan* (Appendix) for the subject property annually, or up to every five years, in cooperation with the landowner. Following guidance in the conservation easement and *Public Hunting Access Plan*, FWP would be responsible for verifying that the landowner offers the opportunity for at least 50 hunter days of fair and equitable, free public-hunting access (excluding the landowner’s family and employees) each year into the future,. FWP would provide an enforcement presence consistent with

¹ Available at <https://dojmt.gov/wp-content/uploads/Final-AT-Restoration-Plan-Combined.pdf> Accessed 18 Dec 2018.

² Available at <http://fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/conservationInAction/swap2015Plan.html> Accessed 18 Dec 2018.

its presence on other conservation easements, Block Management Areas, Fishing Access Sites and similar points of public hunting access on or surrounded by private lands.

10. Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency

FVLT would oversee and enforce the terms of the CE except for the assigned right of public hunting access, which would be the responsibility of FWP. FVLT would retain a right of revocation of this right to FWP.

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CHECKLIST

Evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment.

A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. <u>LAND RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Un-known	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		X				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil, which would reduce productivity or fertility?		X				
c. Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				

1. FWP's proposed acquisition of the public hunting access right from the conservation easement held by FVLT would have no impact on land resources.

2. <u>AIR</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Un-known	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (Also see 13 (c).)		X				2a
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		X				
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. <u>For P-R/D-J projects</u> , will the project result in any discharge, which will conflict with federal or state air quality regulations? (Also see 2a.)		X				

2a. The ambient air quality would not change if FWP acquired the public hunting access rights because motorized access would continue to be limited to established public roads, with walk-in access for hunting recreation.

3. <u>WATER</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Un-known	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?		X				
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?		X				
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of floodwater or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
l. For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c.)		X				
m. For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a.)		X				

3. FWP's proposal to acquire assignment of the public hunting access rights for the Buxbaum Ranch would have no effect on existing quality, quantity, or flooding of natural surface waters or groundwater. The designated access points to the property used by hunters would not adversely affect water resources.

4. <u>VEGETATION</u> Will the proposed action result in?	IMPACT					
	Un-known	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?		X				
b. Alteration of a plant community?		X				
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?			X			4e
f. For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		X				

4e. The proposed acquisition of the public hunting access right would increase public use at access points which could facilitate introduction or spread of noxious weeds.

5. <u>FISH/WILDLIFE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Un-known	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		X				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?			X			5g
h. <u>For P-R/D-J</u> , will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f.)		X				
i. <u>For P-R/D-J</u> , will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d.)		X				

5g. The proposed public hunting access is expected to increase hunting pressure that can stress wildlife populations. However, this impact is not expected to negatively affect game populations overall in the area.

B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Un-known	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Increases in existing noise levels?		X				
b. Exposure of people to serve or nuisance noise levels?		X				
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				

The proposed acquisition would not increase noise above levels currently experienced in the area. Access to the Buxbaum Ranch would remain walk-in for hunting access and motorized use would be restricted to roads leading to designated access points.

7. <u>LAND USE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Un-known	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		X				
b. Conflicted with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		X				

The acquisition of the public hunting access rights by FWP from FVLT would introduce higher levels of hunting pressure on the property compared to historic use. The property would be accessible by the public for hunting in perpetuity and current land uses by the landowner would continue.

8. <u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Un-known	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?		X				
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan, or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?			X			8c
d. For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)		X				

8c. The proposed acquisition of hunting access rights on the Buxbaum Ranch would increase the probability of hunting-related injuries on the property. However, there is no reason to conclude that the property represents an abnormally high-risk situation because hunter numbers would be restricted to safe levels proportional to the size and openness of the property.

9. <u>COMMUNITY IMPACT</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Un-known	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		X				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?		X				

The acquisition of the public hunting access right would have no effect on local communities, increase traffic hazards, or alter the distribution of population in the area.

10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/ TAXES/ UTILITIES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Un-known	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Will the proposed action have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify:		X				
b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				
c. Will the proposed action result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Will the proposed action result in increased use of any energy source?		X				
e. Define projected revenue sources		N/A				
f. Define projected maintenance costs.		N/A				

The proposed right acquisition would have no impact on public services or utilities.

11. <u>AESTHETICS/RECREATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Un-known	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?		X				
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		X				
c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings?			X			11c
d. For P-R/D-J, will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c.)		X				

11c. The proposed acquisition of the public hunting access right would increase the accessibility and use of the Buxbaum Ranch and adjacent public lands by hunters.

12. <u>CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Un-known	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic or paleontological importance?		X				
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a.)		X				

FWP anticipates there would be no impact to cultural or historic resources if the acquisition were approved and hunting access is maintained on the property and adjacent public lands. FWP's jurisdiction does not include groundbreaking or ground-disturbing activities.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

13. <u>SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE</u> Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:	IMPACT					
	Un-known	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources that create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)		X				13a
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects, which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?		X				13e.
f. <u>For P-R/D-J</u> , is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e.)		X				
g. <u>For P-R/D-J</u> , list any federal or state permits required.		X				

13a. No secondary or cumulative impacts are anticipated if FWP were to acquire the public hunting-access rights for the Buxbaum Ranch from FVLT.

13e. No public controversy is expected to be generated by the proposed acquisition.

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

The proposed acquisition would allow FWP to protect in perpetuity the public hunting access component of the FVLT conservation easement on the Buxbaum Ranch and through the property to adjacent public lands for hunting activities.

PART IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. Public involvement

The public would be notified in the following manners about the opportunity to comment on this current EA, the proposed action, and alternative:

- Legal notices will be published twice each in each of these newspapers: *Independent Record* (Helena), *Missoulian*, *Montana Standard* (Butte), *Philipsburg Mail*, and *Silver State Post* (Deer Lodge).
- Public notice will be posted on FWP's webpage: <http://fwp.mt.gov> ("News," then "Public Notices"). The Draft EA would also be available on this webpage, along with the opportunity to submit comments online.
- Copies would be available at the FWP Region 2 Headquarters in Missoula and the FWP State Headquarters in Helena.
- A news release would be prepared and distributed to a standard list of media outlets interested in FWP Region 2 issues; this news release would also be posted on FWP's website <http://fwp.mt.gov> ("News," then "News Releases"). This news release would also be posted on FWP Region 2's website <http://fwp.mt.gov/regions/r2/>.
- Direct mailing or email notification would be made to adjacent landowners and other interested parties (individuals, groups, agencies) to ensure their knowledge of the proposed project.
- FWP will hold a public hearing in Drummond on January 8, 2019 (Tuesday) at 6:30 p.m. at the Drummond Community Center (54 East Broad Street) to discuss the proposed public hunting access for the conservation easement, answer questions and take public comment.

Copies of this draft EA may be obtained by mail from Region 2 FWP, 3201 Spurgin Rd., Missoula 59804; by phoning 406-542-5540; by emailing shrose@mt.gov; or by viewing FWP's Internet website <http://fwp.mt.gov> ("Public Notices," beginning December 18, 2019).

This level of public notice and participation is appropriate for a project of this scope with no significant physical or human impacts and only minor impacts that can be mitigated.

2. Duration of comment period

The public comment period will extend for thirty (30) days following the publication of the legal notice in the *Missoulian*. Comments must be received by FWP no later than January 17, 2019.

Comments may be made online on the EA's webpage, mailed to the FWP address below, or emailed to Sharon Rose at shrose@mt.gov :

Region 2 FWP
Attn: Graveley CE Access
3201 Spurgin Rd.
Missoula, MT 59804

PART V. EA PREPARATION

- 1. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required?** No

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action.

No, an EIS is not required. Based on an evaluation of the primary, secondary, and cumulative impacts to the physical and human environment, no significant impacts from the proposed acquisition were identified. In determining the significance of the impacts of the proposed project, FWP assessed the severity, duration, geographic extent, and frequency of the impact, the probability that the impact would occur, or reasonable assurance that the impact would not occur. FWP assessed the importance to the state and to society of the environmental resource or value affected; any precedent that would be set as a result of an impact of the proposed action that would commit FWP to future actions; and potential conflicts with local, federal, or state laws. As this EA revealed no significant impacts from the proposed actions, an EA is the appropriate level of review and an EIS is not required.

- 2. Persons responsible for preparing the EA**
Torrey Ritter, FWP Regional Nongame Biologist, Missoula, MT
- 3. List of agencies or offices consulted during preparation of the EA**
Natural Resource Damage Program, Helena, MT
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks:
 Lands, Helena, MT
 Wildlife, Helena, MT
 Access, Missoula, MT

APPENDIX. Draft proposed *Public Hunting Access Plan* for the Buxbaum-Boulder Creek Conservation Easement for public hunting access under terms of the proposed conservation easement to be held by Five Valleys Land Trust.

Regulations for

BUXBAUM RANCH PUBLIC ACCESS PLAN

Deer/Elk Hunting Districts: 217

Hunting Access Dates: August 15 – September 30, 2018 &
November 1, 2018 – February 15, 2019

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Buxbaum Ranch Special Access Area is located south of Drummond and north of Philipsburg in Granite County. Hunting access is provided by a private landowner on approximately 1,193 acres.

This Special Access Area provides hunting access for elk, mule deer, white-tailed deer, black bear, upland game bird, waterfowl, moose and mountain lion on private land.

HUNTING IS NOT ALLOWED ANYTIME IN OCTOBER. DURING THIS TIME THE BUXBAUM RANCH HAS ACTIVE CATTLE OPERATIONS AND WILL BE CLOSED TO HUNTING.

PERMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Written permission is required to hunt the Buxbaum Ranch Special Access Area and hunting access is limited to **ONE (1) hunting party per day**.

To receive written permission contact John at the Buxbaum Ranch between **9:00AM – 4:00PM Monday – Friday**. Call John Buxbaum at (406)274-0806 to arrange to receive a permission slip. Please leave a message if necessary.

Two permission slips will be issued per hunter. Hunters are required to place one permission slip face up on the dash of their vehicle and keep the other with them while hunting.

HUNTERS SHOULD BE AWARE THAT THE NUMBER OF HUNTING PARTIES ALLOWED ANNUALLY ON THIS PROPERTY IS LIMITED.

REGULATIONS

1. **Hunters are required to access this area from DESIGNATED PARKING AREAS** represented on accompanying map. Designated parking areas are located along public roads.
2. Motorized vehicle travel is not allowed on this BMA. Non-motorized access is open to foot, horseback and non-motorized bicycle only.
3. Do not park vehicles in such a manner as to obstruct traffic. **DO NOT BLOCK GATES.**
4. Hunters need to be aware that cattle are present on this property. Do not shoot near cattle.
5. Camping and fires are prohibited. Do not litter.
6. Hunters are required to retrieve game by non-motorized methods.
7. Commercial outfitting is prohibited.
8. Fish & Wildlife Commission-approved hunting regulations apply. Hunters are required to possess the necessary hunting licenses associated with the species and hunting district they are hunting.

SPECIAL ACCESS AREA - BUXBAUM 1/4/2018 KM

TO ASSURE YOUR FUTURE HUNTING PRIVILEGES IN THIS AREA, PLEASE OBEY THESE REGULATIONS AND RESPECT PRIVATE PROPERTY.

REPORT VIOLATIONS: 1-800-TIP-MONT



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

Region 2 Office
3201 Spurgin Road, Missoula, MT 59804-3101
Phone 406-542-5500
(M-F, 8 A.M.-5 P.M., excluding holidays)